



U.S. Department of Justice

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Oct 5, 2006

EVENT: Indictments

Defendant: Highwaymen Outlaw Motorcycle Organization et al

**TWENTY TWO MEMBERS/ASSOCIATES OF THE HIGHWAYMEN
OUTLAW MOTORCYCLE ORGANIZATION INDICTED**

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today that twenty two Metropolitan Detroit area residents were charged in three separate indictments with drug conspiracy and continuing criminal enterprise offenses.¹

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Daniel D. Roberts, FBI Special Agent in Charge.

The indictments charge that various members and associates of the Highwaymen Outlaw Motorcycle Organization conspired to distribute a variety of controlled substances in and around the Detroit area, from 2005 through the present. These substances included cocaine, marijuana, and ecstasy. The individuals charged in one of the indictments are Aref Nagi, 43 of Sterling Heights, Nat Sanchez, 36, of Detroit, James Gebara, 36, of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, Erick Manners, 29, of Newport, MI, Michael Cicchetti, 51 of Taylor, Leonard Moore, 36, of Lincoln Park, Donald Gill, 30, of Detroit, Miseal Gonzalez, 28, of Detroit,

¹The indictments were obtained on September 5, 2006, but were kept under seal until today.

Monica Zuk, 30, of Westland, Mary Lou Rodgers of Buffalo, New York, Michael Watson, 27, of Jackson, Aaron Roberts, 22 of Lansing, Nicholas Jackson, 33, of Memphis, Tennessee, Tamara Swiden, 24, of Pontiac, Johnny Jarrell, 42, of Taylor, Nasser Nagi, 20, of Sterling Heights, and Gary Ball Jr, 41, of Dearborn. They each face up to forty years in prison and a \$1,000,000 fine if convicted. Additionally, the lead defendant, Aref Nagi, has been charged with operating a continuing criminal enterprise. This offense can carry a mandatory thirty year minimum prison term if convicted.

Also charged in separate indictments were Robert Burton, 37, of Allen Park, Steve Rhoads, 34, of Detroit, Anthony Smerigan, 44, of Melvindale, Edward Gabbard, 30, of Detroit, and John McGinn, 44, of Lincoln Park.

Agents executed twelve search warrants this morning at various homes and clubhouses in the metro Detroit area. The searches yielded 18 assault rifles, 14 pistols, 4 shotguns and 1 .30 caliber machine gun.

United States Attorney Murphy stated, "Armed and organized gangs devoted to the illegal drug trade pose a grave risk to the law abiding members of our community. My office, the FBI, the Brownstown Police, and other local law enforcement agencies view organized or gang crime as a top priority that deserves an aggressive response."

Daniel D. Roberts, Special Agent in Charge of the Detroit Office of the FBI, stated that "The arrests and search warrants which were executed today represent the initial phase of a long term investigation. Roberts wishes to publicly recognize the hard work of dedicated law enforcement officers from the following agencies which were involved in this investigation: Michigan State Police, including the Down River Anti-Narcotics Organization (DRANO) and the Down River Auto Theft Team (DRATT); and the joint FBI/Detroit Police Department Violent Crimes/Gangs Task Force, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA); and the Wayne County Sheriff's Department. Roberts wished to thank especially Chief Daniel Grant of the Brownstown Police Department. Roberts noted that Grant and his officers were instrumental in this investigation.

An indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is entitled to a fair trial in which it will be the government's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The case was investigated by special agents of the FBI and by officers from the Brownstown Police Department. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Diane L. Marion.